the UN Security Council on 6th August, 1990 on trade with Iraq, the balance amount could not be realised by purchase of crude oil from Iraq.

A proposal for financial assistance linked with additional export obligation on the project exporters concerned, is under examination for the unrealised portion of the amount due in 1990-91.

Export of dried seafood

479. SHRI S. MADHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that export of dried seafood has been adversely affected because of the high prices for seafood at home;

(b) whether the exporters of dried seafood have submitted a memorandum to Government seeking a ban on consignments of dried seafood sent as part of passenger luggage; and

(c) what action is proposed to be taken to help the export of dried seafood?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATEL): (a) No, Sir. Export of dried fish was not affected due to high prices for seafood at home as the items exported are low priced having low domestic demand.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Some of the exporter Association have given a memorandum to the Government that dried seafoods such of sharkfins/tails, fish maws, beche-de-mers, etc. are exported illegally to Singapore as personal baggages by air passengers from Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and Trivandrum.

This Ministry has already brought this matter to the notice of Central Board of Excise & Customs (CBEC), Ministry of Finance. CBEC has reported that no such instances of export of commercial quantities of dried sharkfins/tails, fish maws and other dried marine products in baggage have been noticed.

Relief provided under debt waiving scheme

480. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU
SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA:
SHRI S. K. T. RAMACHANDRAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of farmers and artisans who have been provided relief under debt waiver scheme as on 15th February, 1991; and

(b) what is the amount involved?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) and (b) Under the Agricultural and Rural Debt Relief (ARDR) Scheme, debt relief is provided to farmers, artisans and weavers in rural areas. The data reporting system does not generate the information for various categories of beneficiaries separately. However, as on 25th February, 1991, 2.62 crores beneficiaries have already been provided debt relief to the extent of Rs. 6651 crores by public sector banks, regional rural banks and cooperative banks.

New Saving Scheme for retiring employees of Public Sector Undertakings

481. SHRI R. GANESAN alias MISA R. GANESAN:
SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have announced a new savings scheme for retiring employees of Public Sector Undertakings; and

(b) if so, what are its salient features of the said scheme?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) &

(b) Deposit Scheme for Retiring Employees of Public Sector Companies, 1991 has been introduced from 1st January 1991. The scheme is operated through selected branches of the public sector banks. The salient features of the scheme are as follows:—

(i) The scheme is open for investment by retired/retiring employees of Public Sector Companies as established by or under any Central/State Act or a Government Company as defined in the Companies Act 1956.

(ii) Investments may be made upto the maximum of total of the retirement benefits received by such employees.

(iii) A depositor may open only one account under this scheme minimum deposit being Rs. 1000/-

(iv) A depositor may at his option withdraw the entire balance or part thereof after the expiry of 3 years from the date of deposit.

(v) Deposits carry interest @ 9 per cent per annum. The interest earned on the deposit is exempt from income-tax.

(vi) Premature withdrawal is allowed after expiry of one year from the date of deposit, subject to conditions indicated in the scheme.

(vii) The whole of amount of deposits under this scheme is exempt from wealth tax.

Austerity measures taken by Government

482. SHRI G. S. SWELL:
SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA:
SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU.
SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the amount of money saved so far through various austerity measures imposed by Government on account of financial crunch that the country is passing through; and

(b) what further steps Government propose to take in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) and (b) The question of effecting economy in Government expenditure is under constant review of Government. With this end in view, instructions are issued from time to time to all the Ministries/Departments of Government to reduce expenditure on various items. As expenditure on such items is not compiled centrally, it is difficult to quantify the amount of saving effected through these measures.

News-item captioned 'Pepsi fails in its commitment'

483. SHRI PRABHAKAR RAO KALVALA:
DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY:
SHRI RANJIT SINGH :

Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item appeared in "The Hindustan Times" of 7th February, 1991 captioned "Pepsi fails in its commitment";

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereof?

THE MINISTER FOR TEXTILES AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A team consisting of three officers was deputed to visit establishments of M/s. Pepsi Foods